



## **SENATE BILL 590 – SCHOOL SAFETY**

(CH. 2021-176, LAWS OF FLORIDA)

<b>BILL SPONSOR(S)</b>	Senator Harrell
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE(S)</b>	July 1, 2021
<b>STATUTE(S)</b>	Amends sections (ss.) 381.0056, 394.463, 1001.212, 1002.20, 1002.33, 1006.07, 1006.12, 1008.386, and 1011.62, Florida Statutes (F.S.)

### **SUMMARY**

Strengthens oversight and compliance on school safety and aligns resources to better address student mental health issues. Requires principals to attempt to notify a parent or guardian before an involuntary examination of a minor as well as timely notification of threats, unlawful acts and significant emergencies. Requires codes of student conduct to include provisions relating to civil citation or similar pre-arrest diversion programs for specified purposes and revises training requirements for school safety officers. Includes procedures to assist mental or behavioral health service providers, or school resource or safety officers, who have completed mental health crisis intervention training, to verbally de-escalate a student’s crisis before initiating an involuntary examination.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Requires school health services plans to include a reasonable attempt to notify a parent or guardian before removing a student from school or a school-sponsored activity for an involuntary examination subject to the requirements and exceptions established under ss. 1002.20(3) and 1002.33(9), F.S. Principals or their designee are responsible for the attempted notification at traditional public and charter schools.
- Requires the principal or principal’s designee of public and charter schools to use and document available methods of communication to contact the student’s parent, guardian or other known emergency contact, including but not limited to telephone calls, text messages, emails and voice mail messages following the decision to initiate an involuntary examination of the student.
- Requires the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) to report the number of involuntary examinations initiated at each school or school-sponsored activity and the number of students for whom an involuntary examination was initiated to the Mental Health Institute at the University of South Florida. This data is provided to support the evaluation of mental health services in the state pursuant to s. 1004.44, F.S.
- Requires the principal or principal’s designee of public and charter schools to notify the parent before a student is removed from school, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity to be taken to a receiving facility for an involuntary examination.
- Provides that parents of public and charter school students have a right to timely notification of threats, unlawful acts and significant emergencies and access to school safety and discipline incidents as reported in SESIR, pursuant to s. 1006.07(4), (7), and (9) F.S.



# 2021 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

- Allows the principal or principal’s designee to delay notification, for no more than 24 hours, if the principal or designee believes that such a delay is necessary to avoid jeopardizing the health and safety of the student.
- Requires districts to develop criteria for the following:
  - Recommendations that a student who commits a criminal offense be allowed to participate in a civil citation or pre-arrest diversion program as an alternative to expulsion or arrest; and
  - Develop criteria for assigning a student to a school-based intervention program when that student commits a petty act of misconduct. Assignments for non-criminal offenses cannot be entered in the Juvenile Justice Information System Prevention Web.
- Permits school districts to provide accommodations for drills conducted by exceptional student education centers.
- Expands district school board emergency procedures to include emergency preparedness policies and procedures.
- Requires school safety officers to complete mental health crisis intervention training, which will include de-escalation skills.
- Requires districts to annually report to FDOE the number of involuntary examinations at schools, on school transportation or at school-sponsored activities.
- Requires districts to include the telephone numbers for national or statewide crisis and suicide hotlines and text lines on student identification cards issued to students in grades 6-12.
- Requires that districts’ mental health assistance allocation plans include procedures to assist mental or behavioral health service providers, or school resource or school safety officers who have completed mental health crisis intervention training, to verbally de-escalate a student’s crisis before initiating an involuntary examination. The procedures must include strategies to de-escalate a crisis situation for a student with a developmental disability.

## **GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE**

<b>July 1, 2021</b>	The act becomes effective.
<b>2021-2022 School Year</b>	Public school districts must include telephone numbers for national or statewide crisis and suicide hotlines and text lines on student identification cards in grades 6 through 12.